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me in her mother's room'. The other categories are blurred; any adult of the domestic group is described as a 'mother' or 'father'.

During these first three or four years a child's father, though he sees less of it than its mother does, is as loving and indulgent a parent. A baby can do no wrong; for, as Tallensi say, 'it has no sense (*u ka yam*)'. I have seen an infant screaming in a tantrum or nagging tiresomely at its mother while she was too busy with a household task, such as cooking, to attend to it, and its father come in and carry it off to soothe it. What discipline or frustration of impulse a child encounters in this period comes mainly from its mother or a young nursemaid. For example until it can drink by itself, an infant is regularly given a drink (*ŋuh*, causative from *ŋu*, to drink), at least once daily, usually when it is bathed. This is an item of hygiene with a quasi-magical stamp. The fluid may be plain water, unboiled or previously boiled and cooled down; or it may be a decoction of roots (*ŋaya*), the generic term for any vegetable products used in Tale leechcraft and medicine. Its composition is prescribed by the child's spirit guardian (*sɛyər*). After its bath the mother lays the child on her lap facing sideways, holds her cupped hand to its mouth, and pours the drink from a small calabash into the babe's mouth. It splutters and chokes, kicks and screams with rage, but the liquid is poured down its throat relentlessly.

Until they can run about by themselves Tale children are not expected to be house-clean. By the age of 3, however, most of them have learnt to run outside to defecate during the day and to ask to be taken outside in the night. They are still apt to micturate indoors wherever they may happen to be. Tallensi do not inculcate clean habits by direct training or by punishing faults in a child. A child acquires cleanliness by a gradual process of habituation[1] and social maturation as its general self-control, its powers of locomotion and of speech, and its identifications with adults grow. But if a small child, already accustomed to run outside, has an accident indoors, it is likely to be rebuked by one of the adults, most probably its mother or an older sibling.

It is also the mother who stands for the most serious deprivation the child experiences up to the age of weaning, the loss of the breast. There is nothing in their folk-lore or customs suggesting that the Tallensi have anything but the most matter-of-fact attitude towards the female breast. I have seen a man, with that utter lack of squeamishness characteristic of most Tallensi, when treating his brother's wife for inability to nurse her baby, himself suck at her breast in order to test the flow of milk. But there is a custom which hints that the mother's breast is felt to be a special symbol of motherhood. If a woman is very grievously affronted by her grown-up son or daughter, and she takes hold of her breast and says, 'I suffered to bear you and this is how you treat me

[1] Described in my *Social and Psychological Aspects of Education in Taleland* as a response to the expectation of normal behaviour.

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through love and solicitude. Tallensi have a maxim. 'If you do not harass your child it will not acquire sense (*Nyɛn pu mugh i bii la u ku ŋɔya yam*).' They do not mean by this that to spare the rod is to spoil the child, as I thought when I first heard it, but that a child must be kept in order and made to conform to accepted standards or else it will not learn to conduct itself properly. They think of this as being chiefly a father's task. A mother, they say, will not thrash (*bo*) her child for misbehaving; she will only scold and upbraid (*nuom*) it. A father has the strength of will (*suhkɟɔ'emɔr*) to thrash his child for misbehaving, and it is his duty to do so.

However, a father does not cease to be tolerant, kindly, and affectionate when his child becomes old enough for discipline. I have never seen a child actually being thrashed by its father, but I have had many accounts of punishments received by children and by men and women in their childhood, and I have often heard children scolded by a father or mother. From what has been said in the early parts of this chapter it can be surmised that Tallensi are very long-suffering with their children. If they punish them it is in anger admitted by the child to be justified. I have heard of children being punished for disobedience, for neglecting or spoiling a task entrusted to them, for yielding to temptation and breaking a food taboo, for stealing a mother's co-wife's ground-nuts, and for other similar faults. They are punished, that is, either for defying the authority of their parents, or for failing to conform to moral or ritual custom or good manners, or for causing economic loss or damage.

In fact Tale children are not often punished. By the time they are considered to be mature enough to deserve punishment for faults they have learnt to accept the control and authority of their parents and seniors as a natural thing and have begun to develop an adult's conscientiousness about the standards and values of their culture. It is noteworthy, for instance, that Tale children are rarely disobedient. Even adults rarely defy a parent's commands. A child of 7 or 8 usually keeps totemic taboos as strictly as an adult.[1] A 9- or 10-year-old has watched sacrifices to the ancestors often enough to have a good idea of what they mean. He knows what a ritual sanction is even if he does not yet understand it. His sense of property is well developed. He distinguishes clearly between *tuum* and *meum*. He knows his father's hen or sheep or cow and his father's brother's, and he can trace the boundaries of his father's farm plots. He has begun to take a responsible part, though but a very small one, in the scheme of domestic organization pivoting around his father. This is the root of his submission to his father's authority.

Two stories illustrate these points very well. When Naabdiya was about 8 years old he was lying on a mat in his mother's *dondɔŋo* one evening, half asleep, listening to the conversation of his parents. The

[1] Cf. *Dynamics of Clanship*, p. 125.

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593 desire to urinate overcame him and being drowsy he wetted the mat. His father saw this and flew into a rage. 'You, a big lad, and you do
●863 this,' he stormed. 'You yourself will wipe the mat with your body'; and he commanded the child to roll in the urine so as to wipe it up. 'I wept', said Naabdiya, 'and I was afraid, but I began to roll in the urine. Then my mother cried out to my father to leave me alone. "Do you want to kill the child? (she cried) I suffered to bear a child and you want to kill him. I myself will wipe it up." But my father did not allow her to do it. A woman's heart is soft because she has borne the child. Thus my father taught me wisdom (*paalɔm yam*).' The moral drawn by Naabdiya needs no comment.

593 The other story shows the strength of paternal authority and the degree to which a boy of 10 or 11 has become imbued with the values of his culture. The boy is Yindɔl, the first-born son of Zaŋ. In 1936 his father went to Kumasi for some months. Before leaving he put aside a small quantity of grain for the family's needs and gave orders that on no account should anybody go into the granary to take any more grain until his return. The supplies he had put aside were soon exhausted. With the help of small gifts from her kinsfolk his wife managed to scrape a meal every other day for her three children. She herself lived almost entirely off wild vegetables which she cooked to supplement the children's porridge. But though they were practically starving neither she nor Yindɔl would go to the granary, because, as Yindɔl said when he told me of their plight, Zaŋ had forbidden it, and in any case he, as a first-born, could not go into his father's granary. Why did his mother not ask her husband's brother to get her some grain from Zaŋ's granary? I asked. 'Oh no', said the boy, speaking as if he were the head of the house in his father's absence, 'she dare not do that. Besides, we shall need that grain for the farming season.'

593 But at the same time as the child is learning to take the authority of his father for granted and fitting himself into the configuration of
866 domestic relations, a contrary process is emerging. This process springs from the psychological and social cleavage that underlies the strong ties of duty, affection, and common interest between parents and children, the universal cleavage between successive generations. The structure of the family gives this process its form; and it is expressed through the economic organization and in ritual values. The 12-year-old is becoming differentiated as a person in his or her own right. Indeed, with boys this process commences at an earlier age, and its first sign is a small boy's refusing to sleep in his mother's room. Girls often continue to sleep with their mother until they are approaching puberty, unless there is a grandmother in the house; then they will go to sleep with her when they are about 6 or 7. A boy, however, is ridiculed by his playmates if he still sleeps in his mother's room after the age of 7 or 8. Generally boys of that age sleep with a grandparent or with the older boys in their

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828 situation everybody takes it for granted that any person participating either already knows, or wants to know, how to behave in a manner appropriate to the situation and in accordance with his level of maturity. An effort to learn is thus evoked as an adaptation to the demands of a real situation. It is not that people expect one another [183 to act with automatic and machine-like precision; for in point of fact 876] Tale culture tolerates considerable elasticity in the patterns of behaviour. We have an analogy in our own culture in the expectation entertained by most adults that little girls want to play with dolls and little boys with toy engines. We act on this expectation whenever we buy presents for children. How exactly this influences the play of Western children has not been investigated, but there can be little doubt that it does. We expect children to know how to play without being taught.

863 In contrast to this, many Western mothers nowadays do not expect their children to acquire clean habits simply in the normal course of development, and therefore set out to train them deliberately from earliest infancy in these habits. Tale mothers never train their children deliberately to be clean. When they reach the stage of walking and talking easily, children are expected not to defecate indoors in the daytime but to be asked to be taken outside or to run out themselves. A lapse meets with an expression of disapproval and a reprimand: 'You are big enough already. Can't you go outside to defecate?' 868 The child learns in response to the expectation that it is capable of 198 normal behaviour in that respect.[1] Similarly, infants are expected to

[1] The example is intended to illustrate how the expectation of normal behaviour acts but, of course, other factors are also involved in the Tale child's acquisition of clean habits. These habits are learnt gradually, not all at once. Before it can walk or talk, its mother or an older child sometimes takes it outside when it shows signs of wishing to defecate. By the time it is expected to be clean it is being drawn into the play-activities of slightly older children, most of which take place out of doors. The need to adapt itself to the habits and standards of its older playmates is a strong stimulus to the child to learn not only bowel and bladder control but also the rules [576 of etiquette. As the Tallensi have no special sanitary arrangements, but excrete 514] in the open anywhere near the homestead, taking care only to keep a little way from the paths and from any people who may be about, it is easy for a child to learn the adult convention from the example of older children and adults. Clean habits, like other skills, are learnt as organic responses (see below, p. 10). I shall refer to this matter again, in another context, in a later section.

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183 After that she must wear a perineal band even at night, in the privacy
291 of her own room, for the sake of modesty. Not to do so, *de mara*
834 *valəm*, ' is embarrassing ' for her and others. Similarly it is indecorous for a young man, especially if he is married, to go about without a loin cloth. His comrades would scoff at him, womenfolk jeer, and his wife be ashamed. Yet the Tallensi have not the slightest sense of shame about the naked body or any physiological functions, all of which they discuss publicly and openly. Ask any one, child or adult, the sex of an infant and the answer will be to open its legs and expose the genitals with the word ' boy ' or ' girl '. An infant's excretory processes arouse no embarrassment and meet with no attempts at
● [863] regulation. As we have seen it is expected to learn cleanliness in due course. The child is made to understand that excreting indoors is a nuisance to those who have to keep the house clean. No one would dream of chastising an infant for this misdemeanour. These are all matters of decency and decorum learnt without formal instructions as direct adjustments to the social space, through the influence of the expectation of normal behaviour.

577 It is otherwise with the morality of property. A thief incurs disgrace
685 and universal opprobrium, and even small children of 6 and 7 express
673 contempt for one. A child that steals, like one who neglects a task,
861 can expect a severe beating if his father is a conscientious citizen. ' Don't let Tii (a boy of about 6) come and see your things,' said Batiignwol, a little girl of 7 or 8, to me one day, ' he 's a thief. He stole his mother's ground-nuts and meat and his father beat him and tied him up.' Theft is immoral as well as criminal. Lying, by contrast, is considered merely foolish and contemptible. It causes annoyance and a liar's comrades distrust him, but one would not punish a child for lying unless it led to serious consequences. Such misdemeanours, nevertheless, go beyond what is merely "unbecoming '. They are not nice, *a-pu maha*.

183 Finally there is a type of observance which is a matter of conscience rather than of public approval or reprobation. Many of these have a ritual character and most of them are associated with mystical notions. There are food taboos which must be observed from infancy; there are ritual obligations such as those connected with mourning, which a person may escape till he reaches adulthood, but